GLASS INSIGHT
Improving Performance In Production
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PYROTEK IMPROVES PERFORMANCE WITH EXPENDABLE REFRACTORY SHAPES

Feeder area expendable refractories are important for optimizing line production, cost mitigation and plant safety. Not all refractories perform equally, and expendable parts must be reliable and have good thermal insulation to optimize production and plant resources. Expendable refractory parts must not only perform well, but supplier manufacturing, pricing and lead times have to be competitive to truly bring value and improve customer performance.

A core Pyrotek customer experienced this increased value with the help of veteran Glass Sales Engineer, Bob Polard. This USA based customer is a leading specialty glass producer manufacturing a variety of products including lamp bases, decorative candle holders and tableware. Their facility runs eight production lines from two furnaces.

Over seven years ago, Pyrotek contacted this company to inquire about meeting their expendable refractory needs. While Pyrotek-supplied refractories performed well, the pricing and lead times were unacceptable to the customer; they opted to stay with their current supplier. Even so, Mr. Polard continued to stay close to them, providing service and support to other parts of their production.

One of Pyrotek's core values is improving performance, both in helping customers excel and to improve their own performance. Over the subsequent years, Pyrotek refocused, changing suppliers and improving internal processes, all to provide better value and improve their customers' performance.

About three years ago, Mr. Polard readdressed refractories with the customer. With the internal improvements, pricing was very competitive and delivery times were estimated at 2–3 weeks less than their current supplier. The customer was impressed with the increased value and asked for a trial evaluation.

The refractories performed fabulously and the customer switched their entire feeder area expendables to Pyrotek-supplied refractories. The customer continues to be satisfied and currently only uses Pyrotek's refractories.

COST SAVINGS

Full process parameters and metrics were charted to assess cost savings delivered to the customer by comparing the performance of existing parts to the new Pyrotek parts on trial.

The unverified annual savings realised were estimated at over USD$4000. These savings were achieved through a variety of factors: reduced manufacturing costs; shorter lead times; quality improvements and more material compositions available.

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